



2017 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Expand Access to School Libraries and Librarians

Background:

- Currently, elementary schools are not required to be staffed by a certified School Library Media Specialist, while secondary schools are only required to do so by Commissioner's Education Regulations. Many school districts disregard the Commissioner's regulations; the NYC Department of Education previously sought a waiver from this requirement.

Impact:

- Passing this bill would ensure that all students, K-12, have access to a school library staffed by a certified school librarian.

Taxpayer Access to Publicly-Funded Research

Background:

- This legislation requires New York State funded research published in peer-reviewed journals be made available online by the state agencies that underwrite such research. This bill would bring NYS in line with the federal standards employed by the National Institute of Health and the State of California.

Impact:

- This bill would eliminate an area of double taxation by making taxpayer-funded scholarly research available after one year.

Provide Universal Access to DASNY Financing for Public Libraries

Background:

- This legislation would make all public libraries eligible for public financing through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. Currently, any library not yet eligible by law for DASNY funding must individually be added to the statutory list of approved institutions.

Impact:

- This legislation would remove an antiquated and cumbersome roadblock for libraries in need of timely renovations.



2017 BUDGET PRIORITY – LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AID

Increase Funding for the Public Library Capital Aid Program to \$25M

Background:

- The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development (DLD) articulates an existing \$2.2B in needed capital investment statewide
- State funding for the public library capital program remained stagnant for nearly a decade at \$14M prior to a nominal \$5M increase in the FY2016-17 enacted state budget
- Without immediate, significant state investment public libraries remain unable to accommodate advances in technological infrastructure, make investments in energy-efficiency, or increase access to differently-abled patrons

Messaging:

- **Public Library infrastructure is rapidly aging**
 - Over 48% of local public libraries are more than 60 years old; an additional 33% are more than 30 years old
 - Over 24% are not accessible to differently-abled patrons
- **Public Libraries require capital investment to accommodate high-speed broadband infrastructure**
 - Underinvestment disproportionately impacts historically underserved populations and economically disadvantaged communities, widening the digital divide
 - A January 2015 Siena poll found that for 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, the public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
- **Public Libraries desperately require energy-efficient infrastructure upgrades**
 - Library use has surged statewide among all demographics, leading to longer hours and increased energy costs
 - Libraries in economically disadvantaged communities cannot afford basic investment in energy-efficient upgrades; increased operating costs have forced shorter hours, reduced staffing, and reduced programming
- **The Public Library Capital Aid matching program boosts local economies**
 - Since 2006, state investment in this program has leveraged \$460M in local funding – a nearly 5:1 return
- **Public Library capital needs have been comparatively underfunded**
 - Public schools: \$2.3B, five-year capital investment (Library Capital Aid = 4.1%)
 - Higher Education: \$3.2B, five-year capital investment in SUNY & CUNY
 - State Parks: \$900M, five-year capital commitment to fully address \$1B in deferred maintenance
 - NYC Budget: \$300M, five-year capital commitment to public libraries



2017 BUDGET PRIORITY – STATE LIBRARY AID

Increase State Library Aid in Proportion with Increases in Education Funding

Background:

- New York State Education Law requires Library Aid for FY 2017-2018 to be \$102.6M. Total state funding in the FY2016-17 enacted budget was \$95.6M, placing library aid at 2006 funding levels.
- More than \$111M in statutory State Library Aid has been withheld since FY2007-2008.

Messaging:

- **Library usage and demand for services are surging statewide**
 - A January 2015 Siena Poll found library usage is up: 10% statewide, 15% among women respondents aged 18-34, nearly 15% among African-American respondents, 15% among Latino respondents, and among all income demographics, with usage up 20% for those households making less than \$50,000 annually.
- **Libraries are a core component of our state's educational infrastructure – LIBRARIES ARE EDUCATION**
 - A January 2015 Siena Poll found that 94% of New Yorkers say their local library is an important part of our education system, with nearly half saying library aid should increase proportionately to increase in education funding.
 - Libraries are chartered by the same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions, and library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education.
 - Libraries are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State. When schools close at the end of each day, each week and each school year, libraries remain open to New York's children and families.
- **Libraries are critical for access and equality**
 - The same January 2015 Siena poll found for nearly 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, the public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
 - Of the respondents who have used their local public library for job seeking or career building programs in the last six months, 53% were African-American, and 40% were households making less than \$50,000 annually
- **Libraries and library systems are models of shared services** and collaborative planning. According to the State Education Department, local communities realize \$7 in services for every \$1 allocated in state aid.